



Bellingham Country Dance Society
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THE BELLINGHAM COUNTRY DANCE SOCIETY CHILD AND YOUTH SAFETY POLICY

The Bellingham Country Dance Society (BCDS) has prepared this Child Safety Policy to demonstrate our commitment to child and youth safety and to promote the importance of ensuring a safe environment for the children who dance with us. The safety of all dancers is of fundamental importance to BCDS and we have zero tolerance for all forms of abuse of anyone.

COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

BCSD is a Child Safe organization. As an organization we are committed to, and focused on, providing a safe community for all dancers and family members at all times. We want our dancers to feel safe, supported, respected, happy and empowered while having fun and developing as community members. The welfare of the children and youth will always be our priority and we have zero tolerance for any abuse. This statement demonstrates the strong commitment of the Board to safety and provides the practices developed to keep everyone safe from any harm, including abuse. It applies to all who come to our dances.

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS TO SAFETY AND PARTICIPATION

BCDS encourage children and youth to express their views. We listen to their suggestions, especially on matters that directly affect them. We actively encourage all children to 'have a say' about things that are important to them. We listen to and act on any concerns children or their parents/caregivers raise with us.

REPORTING A SAFETY COMPLAINT, ALLEGATION OR CONCERN

Anyone can raise a complaint, allegation, or concern, during or after participating at a BCDS event. We treat all complaints, allegations or concerns raised with our organization very seriously and respectfully. Board members have been trained to deal with allegations of abuse. If BCDS

receives an allegation of abuse, our board will investigate that allegation thoroughly and professionally. We are committed to ensuring that the appropriate authorities are notified where we are concerned about the safety, abuse, or potential abuse of children or youth. Contact the BDCS board at: board@bellinghamcountrydance.org

VALUING DIVERSITY

We value diversity and do not tolerate any discriminatory practices. To achieve this, we promote the safe participation and empowerment of children/youth and their families. We welcome children with a disability and their families and act to promote their participation where possible. We seek board members from diverse cultural backgrounds. Our Board actively endorses our child safety policy and are passionate about providing a safe and fun environment for all dancers of all ages, where every dancer feels supported and empowered.

ADULT CODE OF CONDUCT

This Code of Conduct outlines appropriate standards of behavior by adults towards children, young people and all dancers.

At every dance, we welcome all, include all, and act safely.

- We welcome young, old, new and experienced dancers.
- We are kind and gentle with each other.
- We dance with whoever is coming towards us.
- We arrive without perfumes, colognes, scented lotions, etc., because other people may have sensitives or allergies to those products.
- We help other dancers with gentle non-verbal or verbal cues.
- We encourage experienced dancers to dance with new dancers.

We Practice Consent

- We ask people if they'd like to dance with us, whether we know them or not.
- We graciously accept "No thanks" as a response.
- We ask our partner which role they'd like to dance and agree upon those roles together.
- We ask dancers if they would enjoy flourishes/twirls, before adding them.
- We volunteer our preferences verbally and non-verbally.

We Support Our Community

- We speak up if we notice that something doesn't seem right. We speak directly to the individuals involved or to the BCDS board members.

- We give back to the community by helping with setup or cleanup; by inviting new people to dances; by getting to know, and dancing with new dancers.
- We stay home if we have symptoms of a cold, cough, flu, or other illness.

If you have any concerns or suggestions, contact the BDCS board at:
board@bellinghamcountrydance.org

REVIEWING THIS POLICY This policy will be reviewed every two years, and we undertake to seek views, comments and suggestions from dancers of all ages.